

Idealists

In an editorial entitled, "Two Notable Idealists," the New York World tells some plain and wholesome truths in this way:

"What the Deutsche Zeitung of Berlin calls a paradox is the United States, 'notoriously the most materialistic nation in the world, under the guidance of two of the most notable idealists of the time—Wilson and Bryan.' If the Zeitung were as well acquainted with our political history as it is with our industrial and commercial development it would know that we are no strangers to idealism. We began our career as a republic with standards and aspirations which were denounced throughout the world as visions of the impossible. The Declaration of Independence was written by an idealist. It has been cherished for a century and a third by several generations of idealists. We have not always been true to its theories, but there never has been a time in all these years that the American people did not at least profess devotion to its high principles. Such a nation can not be 'notoriously the most materialistic in the world,' for the ideal that it has pursued places it in a class by itself. We at least subscribe to certain beliefs. At times we enforce them vigorously. That we have not dreamed in vain is proved by almost every page of our history. President Wilson and Secretary Bryan are 'the most notable idealists' of the day because they happen to occupy the highest stations and because ability and opportunity have made them great leaders. But they are no more committed to idealism than millions of their countrymen. Their hopes and aims find a response in the heart of nearly every American. The political ideals of the United States have never been in any one man's keeping or dependent upon the favor of any one party. Men have abandoned them and misguided party organizations have abandoned them, but the people as a whole, never. The most grievous harm that has been done them has resulted from their use as a cloak by interests that feared them and hated them. If people at home and abroad will examine the ideals of President Wilson they will find that every one of them is an old American ideal with roots deep in the soil of liberty, equal rights and good order. He is not the forerunner of a fad or an experiment. He is interpreting as the best and greatest of his predecessors interpreted the idealism of 1776, which does not fade."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Bridgeport (Conn.) Telegram: When President Woodrow Wilson selected William Jennings Bryan for secretary of state, he gave the American people the service of one of the most brilliant public men in the country, and at the same time assured himself of an adviser whose broad policies, progressive ideas, high ideals and thorough knowledge of public affairs will be the administration's most valuable asset, in tiding over the periods of storm and stress, and helping to solve the numerous difficult and troublesome problems which it must face.

Since election day, newspapers and politicians throughout the country have busied themselves speculating as to whether or not Mr. Bryan would be given a place in the cabinet. Bitter opposition to Mr. Bryan was unveiled in many quarters, but in no case did it proceed from a source that could be interpreted, even by the widest stretch of the imagination, as an expression of popular opinion. Mr. Bryan's foes are private; his friends are public—or rather, the public. Since the final settlement of the question by his nomination and acceptance of the portfolio of secretary of state, his office in Washington has been the scene of a remarkable demonstration—an enthusiastic welcome, a warmth of widespread congratulation, second only to the reception accorded to the new president. The popularity of Mr. Bryan's appointment is unquestioned; its wisdom is upheld unanimously by the independent thinkers and independent press of the country, and the only opposition was based upon such trifling generalities as to render it negligible.

The first policy announced by the new secretary of state is a noble one and characteristic of the man. He pledges himself to work for world's peace. At a time when Europe is rent by a frightful war, and many of the powers are pursuing a mad race for naval supremacy at the risk of bankruptcy—with war news and rumors of war filling the air—our secretary of state promises to make America a shining example to the rest of the world, for peace, progress, and civilization. No other country stands in such

a splendid position for the promotion of international peace as the United States, and the carrying out of this policy to a successful conclusion will give Mr. Bryan an indisputable place in the galaxy of the world's great men, and earn him the everlasting gratitude not only of this, but of all nations.

The office of secretary of state is one of the foremost positions of national trust. Its list of former occupants abounds with great names—Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, William H. Seward, James G. Blaine, and many others. It is really the closest of all offices to the presidency, and in many cases has been the stepping stone to the higher position. In the present instance it is filled by a man highly honored and deeply trusted by the American people—a man who on three occasions has received the votes of over six million of his fellow citizens for the foremost office in the land, and now is in the happy position of having been sought by, not seeking, the office which he is equipped to fill so ably.

By his choice for secretary of state, President Wilson has proven at the outset his intention of recognizing the will of the people, the demand for new ideals in politics and progress in government—a trend in public opinion that owes its impetus to no other living man so much as to William Jennings Bryan.

THE DIVINITY OF MAN

The following beautiful article was written by Mr. Laurie J. Quinby, editor of the Omaha Chancellor:

While the tremendous storms of Easter Sunday were general, Omaha seems to have been the chief object and center of the most death-dealing terror of them all. Coming from the southwest corner of the city, with a force that beggars description, like myriads of furies massed into one compact train of terror, it plowed its fearful northeastern way for a distance of about five miles, cutting a path several hundred yards wide. It spared neither the rich nor poor, the high nor low, the innocence and sweetness of childhood nor the grim aspect of maturity. It played with mansions of stone and power and with the hovels of the poor, with about as ruthless a hand as ever was imbued with revenge and murder. It strewed its path with terror and despair, converting magnificent streets and boulevards as well as alleys and unkept by-ways into dumping grounds of hell, where maimed and mangled beings were buried under heaps of debris.

Throughout this vast extent of territory, in places half a mile wide and five miles in length, where was reverence and merriment, peace and good will, the tenderness of youth and the venerable aspect of age, within a period of less than five minutes, all was chaos and darkness, anguish of the living, misery of the dying, and the ashen face of death. Some may think they understand these words, but only those who have seen may fully know.

Yet glorious, within this gloom, rises the divinity of man. All lines of separation are wiped away, and man, in his united grandeur rises to immense altitudes in his God-like course. Strong and triumphant, holy and divine, is the heart of humanity. This truth we do not commonly see, but when a crisis comes, ah then, all the coarse and ugly things that commonly we think we see, disappear and the pure and ennobling appears in all its sweetness and light. It appears in friendliness to the friendless, providing homes for the homeless, assisting those in distress, working through a cold and dismal night, in darkness black as hell, lifting timbers from the living, carrying the maimed to shelter, finding a sepulchre for the dead, and with the speech of love soothing stricken hearts. Who would not be a man?

MR. WILSON'S SUMMER HOME

Following is an Associated Press dispatch: Cornish, N. H., March 31.—Harla Kenden house on the Winston Churchill estate, which is to be occupied by President Wilson this summer, will be ready for his use by the middle of April. The work of renovation was begun today. No extensive alterations will be made, but two weeks will be necessary for the regular spring house cleaning, painting and other minor improvements.

The house contains about thirty rooms, of which sixteen are sleeping chambers. It is only two stories high, except on the west end, where the precipitous side of a cliff makes possible an additional story under the ground floor.

Mr. Churchill's study is on the lower floor on the side toward the Connecticut river, and it is

expected that the president will use this room for an office.

Besides the mansion there are two cottages, commodious stables and a garage on the place. The cottages, where it is believed the clerical staff will be lodged, are about an eighth of a mile from the house.

The newspaper correspondents accompanying the president probably will set up their headquarters in Windsor, Vt., across the river from Harla Kenden house and about three miles distant. The only telegraph station in the vicinity is at Windsor and all mail and practically all supplies for Cornish come through the Vermont town.

THINK THIS OVER

Lexington, Ky., March 12, 1913.—Editor The Commoner: The following is a suggestion which I trust you will consider. It embodies an idea, which, if carried out, would tend to stimulate progressive states to further action and to bring reactionary states out of their lethargy.

It would be instructive and interesting information to have the states of the union "ranked" in the order of their progressiveness. Persons capable of such estimating would be, for instance, state reference librarians, legislators, news correspondents, and instructors and graduate students in departments of political science in the leading universities. Their estimates or "rankings" could be combined into a final ranking.

The points to be considered would be, for instance, (1) advanced legislation (labor, regulation, corrupt practices laws, and democratic machinery of government); (2) type of governor, senators and other leaders in political action; (3) general status of civic vigilance.

The people of Wisconsin, Oregon, Nebraska, New Jersey and Ohio are entitled to know how their recent efforts are viewed by those who are able to judge, and the minority of progressives in Alabama, Connecticut, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Utah would be stimulated to make themselves a majority. It is a powerful argument for action, when the people of a state come to know, and to know that others know, that they are enshrouded in political stagnation and inertia. Respectfully,

WILLIAM E. BUTT, Assistant in Economics, State University of Kentucky.

PAGE FOR ST. JAMES

The Associated Press announces that President Wilson has appointed Walter H. Page, editor of the World's Work, to be ambassador to the court of St. James. Mr. Page is a member of the publishing company of Doubleday, Page & Co. A London cablegram, carried by the Associated Press, says: "Commenting on the appointment of Walter H. Page as ambassador to Great Britain the Pall Mall Gazette remarks: 'President Wilson has kept to the tradition which utilizes the bond of literary interest to unite the sympathies of the Anglo-Saxon peoples and Mr. Page can rely on a reception in this country which will embody every element of popular good will.'"

J. PIERPONT MORGAN DEAD

J. Pierpont Morgan, the noted financier, died while on a visit to Rome. He had been sick for several weeks. His daughter, Mrs. Herbert L. Satterlee and her husband, were the only relatives present. The remains will be brought to this country and the burial will be at Harvard, Conn., where the bodies of Mr. Morgan's parents rest.

The news of the financier's death created no serious disturbance in Wall street. It has been known for a long time that Mr. Morgan was seriously ill, and so the influence of his death on the market was discounted.

RENEWALS NOW DUE
The close of the subscription year for the great bulk of Commoner subscribers ended with the last issue in January. Subscriptions ending at that time should be renewed with as little delay as possible in order to facilitate the work of changing and re-entering the addresses on our subscription books and obviate expense of sending out statements announcing that renewals are due.